

*Feb. 28 / Administration of George Bush, 1992*

I have determined that the following major producing and/or major transit countries do not meet the standards set forth in Section 481(h)(2)(A) of the Act, 22 U.S.C. 2291(h)(2)(A):

Afghanistan, Burma, Iran and Syria.

In making these determinations, I have considered the factors set forth in Section 481(h)(3) of the Act, 22 U.S.C. 2291(h)(3), based on the information contained in the

International Narcotics Control Strategy Report of 1992. Because the performance of these countries varies, I have attached an explanatory statement in each case.

You are hereby directed to report this determination to the Congress immediately and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

GEORGE BUSH

*[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 2:42 p.m., March 9, 1992]*

## Remarks to the Associated General Contractors of America in Dallas, Texas

*February 29, 1992*

Thank you all. Pleased be seated. And Marvin, thank you, sir, for your warm welcome, for your wonderful support, for being an outstanding leader of the AGC. And may I salute—although you are not officially in the lame duck status yet—[*laughter*—several more months to go—may I also salute Robins Jackson over here, who will be your successor and I'm sure will do a good job as well. I am delighted to be here with Kirk Fordice, the new and outstanding Governor of the State of Mississippi, one of your own. He's served this outfit well as president. And let me also single out a man I've known for years, the Mayor of your host city, my old friend, a former Member of Congress, Steve Bartlett. What a job he is doing for this great city. Steve, where the heck is he? Right over here. And I'm proud to stand with you today, the men and women who work in construction in this great country. You are one gutsy group of Americans, and I believe the whole country knows it.

We mark an anniversary this week. One year ago, American and allied forces liberated Kuwait. In only 100 hours of ground combat, those troops achieved a magnificent victory. When we drew our line in the sand, I faced resistance from two corners. On one side was the latest wave of out-of-touch liberals who argued that we shouldn't fight for what was right. I also had to contend with another group of skeptics, folks who harbor

a strange nostalgia for the 1930's, when America isolated itself from the world security challenges and from trade opportunities.

But standing steadfast with me were millions of commonsense Americans like yourselves, and right where you've been in good times and in bad. People in our construction trades have never, never, ever been confused about our national symbol. You know it's not the ostrich; it's the eagle. And I am grateful for your support. We agree on the big issues that shape our world and on the values, the values close to home. And I'm talking about jobs, about family, about peace, for ourselves and for, as Marvin said, for our kids.

Today, our top concern is getting the economy moving and growing again. And I couldn't have a better set of partners in this project than the Associated General Contractors of America. We've been together in earlier battles for this cause, and together we've won. And we've stuck to principles, and we've helped make this country strong. I'll always remember where you stood back in 1982, when times were as tough as they get. The economy then was still in a rather deep recession, reeling from the malaise days of the late seventies. Unemployment, you remember, in '82 was 10.7 percent. President Reagan and I knew that the only

effective remedy wasn't more Government control; it was greater freedom. And you shared our long view of things, and you stood with us solidly.

In 1990, when the business cycle turned down, you stood with your President once again and helped me light a fire under the do-nothing Congress of the United States. And because you flexed your muscle, we got one good piece of economic legislation in 1991, one specially good piece: the \$150 billion Surface Transportation Act. It took longer than we wanted, but we got the job done.

As you know, I've speeded up the flow of funds from this measure to modernize our bridges and highways. All across America, we're helping companies put people back to work. In fiscal '92 alone, Federal highway funding will support more than 900,000 jobs.

And I have good news for the American economy as we mark the first anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait. As President, I've placed a top priority on helping Kuwait recover from the ravages of that terrible war, from the environmental disaster, from so many things. And as Kuwait rebuilds, I'm pleased to report that American companies have won more than half of all the reconstruction contracts. In '91 and '92 alone, those contracts will pump an additional \$5 billion into the American economy, and merchandise exports alone will create 60,000 new American jobs. Now, this good news proves that our long-range program to create jobs by pushing exports is working. In the past 5 years, exports have generated almost half of America's growth. And we're going to keep putting Americans to work by opening new markets for American goods around the world.

There's a lot more that we've got to do to build on our achievements. And in my State of the Union Message, I sent a comprehensive economic action plan to the Congress, and I set a deadline: March 20th. You and I know the major cause of the drag on our economy. It is that Government is too big and that it spends too much.

And that's why I was sorry to see what the Democrats in the House of Representatives did just this past Thursday. To play election-year politics as usual—let me step

back. I urged the Congress in the State of the Union to put politics aside and to pass an incentive program, telling them I'll be glad to engage with them politically after the 20th of March and they should lay politics aside until then. I asked them to put politics aside as usual, but playing politics, they passed up a chance to stimulate the economy.

The plan they passed will raise the deficit, will raise taxes, will ruin the fledgling economic recovery, and worst of all, it will not create jobs. So let me right here, before the AGC, end any suspense: If that plan reaches my desk, I will veto it fast and send it back to the United States Congress.

On March 20th, I want to sign into law reforms to get our economy moving. I really think that's good. And we need to get business growing again right now, upgrading plant and equipment again, hiring workers again. We need incentives, incentives like an investment tax allowance. Consider how that would help Williams Brothers Construction Company, just for example. If my 15-percent investment tax allowance is passed by Congress, it will mean an additional \$300,000 in working capital this year for this equipment-intensive contractor.

And yes, it is clearly time for Congress to cut that tax on job creation and investment. It is time to cut the tax on capital gains.

To get housing back on its feet, I've put forward what I think most people across this country see as commonsense proposals to get people buying and building homes. For instance—we talk about family—but for instance, I'm asking for a \$5,000 tax credit for first-time homebuyers. The Democrats in the House offer these young people nothing. But with our plan, young people almost able to buy that first home could do it with the extra \$5,000 in their pocket.

Just the other day I met with your industry partners, the National Association of Home Builders. Their economists predict that this year alone, this year alone, my plan would mean an extra 200,000 homes built and 415,000 new jobs in the homebuilding side of the construction business. Since you clear the tracts and pave the new streets and build the shopping and office

centers that go with new neighborhoods, I know that growth in housing would be welcome on your side of the business, too.

Your powers of persuasion are legendary. You've got a lot of respect, power in the corridors of power. And so, I'm counting on you to get my message to the Congress: Pass this incentive plan, and meet the deadline. Tell your Members of Congress, March 20th is when the rubber meets the road. And March 20th is when the Congress has to make a choice: Put America back to work, or go with the old tax-and-spend politics as usual. I believe March 20th is the time to do something good for the American people. Please get that message to Congress.

While Congress chafes under that deadline, and while Senate Democrats now float tax plans that would end up raising tax rates for people who make \$35,000 a year, I have taken actions on my own to get the economy moving. For example, we've begun an unprecedented, top-to-bottom reform of business regulation.

During the weeks since the State of the Union Address, we've changed key banking rules to ease the credit crunch. For healthy banks, we've changed overly strict definitions of bank capital, creating more access to capital. We've also cut redtape to make it easier for small businesses to get capital from the securities markets. And we've accomplished important reforms to the burdensome payroll tax system.

But that's not all. On January 28th, I instituted a 90-day freeze on new Federal regulations that could hinder economic growth. And we're also reviewing all existing rules, and we will propose legislation wherever needed to reform burdensome regulation. And let me tell you, we will take every action we can to stop regulations that hurt growth and speed up rules that will help get this economy growing. We are overregulated, and I need your help with Congress on that point as well.

Marvin and others have been in touch. And I know that the construction industry is hard-hit by Federal regulation. That's why we've acted to allow Federal contractors more flexibility in the use of less-skilled workers. We recently began implementing an important rule that allows such cost-sav-

ing measures. Not only will the rule make it easier for construction firms to do business, it will also save taxpayers an estimated \$600 million a year.

Many times there's a noble idea behind a regulation, but many times regulators go to unreasonable extremes. My message to Congress, and yes, to the regulators in the executive branch is this: Overregulation is just that, it's over. And let me say this: If there are exceptions—and some regulators have not gotten the word—tell your leadership, tell Marvin here, let us know. And I will do my level best to clear out any unfair obstacles to growth.

I'm also fighting hard against another epidemic that's stricken America, against the epidemic of lawsuits, 18 million last year alone. I think you got it but lest you didn't, 18 million last year alone. The costs and delays in our legal system are a hidden tax on every construction operator, on every consumer, on every business transaction in this country.

And it's not just the cost of doing business that's being affected. Frivolous lawsuits are tearing apart our social fabric in this country. Some of you probably coach Little League. You're aware, as well as I am, that all around this country fathers are quitting as Little League coaches because they're afraid of liability lawsuits. That's a sign that something's wrong. Or when people stop volunteering in their communities because they fear some ambulance-chasing lawyer, something is terribly wrong. And I've even heard that communities have had to cancel Fourth of July fireworks displays because they can't get liability insurance.

Well, I am determined to change that. And I've sent a reform bill to Congress to halt needless lawsuits and to give Americans easier alternatives for settling disputes. I see that you in the AGC have your own industry initiative to achieve more partnership and fewer lawsuits among contractors and subcontractors. And I applaud you for doing this. The real answer to solving problems is to be more concerned with helping each other than suing each other. And I want to fight for the reforms that will back up that principle. So, let's work together. Let's keep working together to break up

America's love affair with the lawsuit.

Since the first settlers came to our shores, Americans have been a restless people. We're forever on the move building, inventing, expanding, renewing. And I share that spirit, and I've never been more restless than now about the state of affairs in Washington. The rest of the world looks to us as a beacon—don't listen to the naysayers on this point—the rest of the world looks to us as a beacon, as the strongest, bravest, freest, most generous nation on Earth. But in our Nation's Capital, the tired old liberal leadership of Congress is mired in cynicism and defeatism.

For 3 years, I've wrestled with a Congress too often paralyzed, tangled up by a 30,000-person bureaucracy and a \$1.5 billion budget, a Congress too caught up in protecting their special perks and privileges to perform the public's business. No wonder term limits for Congress are picking up support. And I agree. If we have term limits on the President, term limits for Congress is a good idea, too. And let's work for it.

The old ways have to change. People want change. Each one of you is a proven leader in a trade that wrote the book about getting top-quality projects done, and done within deadlines. So, I'm counting on you to make Congress learn how to meet a deadline.

My opponents have cornered the market for slick rhetoric. But when it comes to delivering results, I have a plan that will stimulate economic growth. And they don't.

I need your help. Help me get a message to Capitol Hill. Tell them what hard-hat America thinks about Congress and its politics-as-usual. Tell them the construction trades support this plan to get our economy moving. And tell them I'm dead serious about that deadline and that you're dead serious about the deadline. And tell them my plan sets down a solid foundation for lifting this country to new heights.

This convention hall holds very special memories for me. It was here in 1984 that Ronald Reagan and I accepted our party's

nomination for a second term as President and Vice President of the United States. And I was very proud to serve with Ronald Reagan, and he's a man of vision and courage and achievement. And remember the recession of 1982? It was tough then. Remember the criticism? Remember the noise on Capitol Hill? Unemployment got up to 10.7 percent. But we stayed tough, kept the Congress from doing crazy things, renewed our commitment to keep this country moving forward for the long haul. We pulled out of the doldrums, and we kept moving America forward because we had your support and the support of millions like you who share our values.

And yes, times are tough now, but we will stick to principle. And we will again come through these sluggish economic times. This is no time for despair. This is time for determination. And this is time for action.

The American people are getting a little tired, frankly, of the gloom and doom they hear every single night on television. And I'm glad my frank wife, Barbara, is not here or she'd tell you what she thought about that. *[Laughter]*

Our side will prevail again. With your mind and your muscle, we'll prove the pessimists wrong again. People know we're in a battle for the future—about jobs; it's about family; it's about world peace; it's about the kind of legacy we're going to leave the young ones here today. And we will renew this country, and I guarantee you we will keep it strong. And we will build a better America.

Thank you. Good luck to each and every one of you. And may God bless the United States of America. Thank you very, very much.

*Note: The President spoke at 9:44 a.m. at the Dallas Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Marvin Black, president of the Associated General Contractors of America.*